

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

Subject: A trip to Carpatho-Ukraine by a Ukrainian emigre family of Belgian citizenship in July-August, 1966.

Source: P

Date: 13 September 1966

USHITYNA

1. The family Pop from Bray, near Mons, consisting of father, mother (aged between 45 and 50), daughter (20-25) and son (around 15), spent two months (July and August) in the Carpatho-Ukraine, Ukrainian S.S.R. Their route took them through Germany, Czechoslovakia to Mukachev. From there they turned south to Burshtyn. Mr. Pop's brother is the head of the village council and a communist, and a cousin of his is a chief in the Kolhosp of the same region. The daughter of the head of the village council is a teacher. The family Pop traveled not like tourists, but like visitors without any special guides. There were no incidents concerning their travel and they were free to visit all of Carpatho-Ukraine.

2. When entering the USSR they were thoroughly checked. Men checked the men and women checked the women. The border officers even chopped up the oranges that they carried. Bags were searched to the last piece of paper. The same and even stricter procedure occurred on their return trip.

3. From Mukachev they traveled by train to Burshtyn, their place of residence. There they lived in the home of Mrs. Pop's father who is 90 years old and has rendered some ~~special service to~~ the Soviet Union. Mrs. Pop's father at one time was very rich, but he voluntarily turned everything to the Soviets. Mrs. Pop dreams that she will someday be able to bring her father back to Belgium. This was the third trip that the family Pop has taken to Ukraine.

4. Their general feeling is that in the last three years the standard of living has risen. Three years ago they only ate black bread that stuck to the knife upon being cut. Now one can even find white bread. Nevertheless, they ate badly and the boy, as a consequence, lost 6 kilograms in the two months of their stay. The food consisted of borsch, potatoes, cabbage and sour milk. Fish and meats though very tasty were seldom seen. The peasants are not badly off with their piece of land, a cow, two pigs, and chickens. But they don't have any money. A real catastrophe occurs when a cow dies in any one family, for this deprives the family of milk, butter and cheese which are the essentials of their diet.

5. Both a kolhosp and a radhosp operated in that village. The workers of the radhosp were paid in cash, while the workers in the kolhosp were given a pay in kind (crops) at the end of the year.

6. The travelers also noticed that there was a great drinking problem, as well as instances of theft such as the event in Burshtyn where recently a truck driver was killed and robbed of 9 thousand rubles. In Khust they saw one beatnik, or to be more precise, someone who looked like one. On Saturdays the young and the old alike gather together and amuse themselves

13 Sept 66

74-1641-113

with music and song. There are some youth clubs in these regions. With regards to the language, the older generation speaks mostly the Zakarpathian dialect but on the whole one hears the Ukrainian and Russian languages. All slogans, however, are printed in Ukrainian. The language of the schools is also Ukrainian. Students have no choice in foreign languages. There are some schools that teach English and some that teach German but all teach Russian. Final exams must be taken in Lviv and not in their local schools. This is a great inconvenience to the poor people of the mountains.

7. They heard nothing about the arrests of Ukrainian writers.

8. Three years ago in practically every store one could find items stamped "made in China". Now they have all disappeared.

9. Observing that there were no males in the photographs I was told that males work in factories in other parts of the Ukraine.